

City of New York
Independent Budget Office
Local Law 12 of 2023

5-Year Accessibility Plan
(2024-2028)

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Background

Local Law 12 of 2023 requires every New York City agency to prepare and publish a five-year accessibility plan setting forth steps it is taking to “ensure the agency’s workplace, services, programs and activities are accessible to and accommodating and inclusive of persons with disabilities” by considering physical, digital, and programmatic access and providing effective communications for persons with disabilities.

IBO is committed to a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment and to ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to publications, presentations, and programming developed by the agency.

IBO’s 5-year accessibility plan has been developed by a committee consisting of multi-disciplinary professionals from all areas of IBO’s operations. The committee will oversee the implementation of this plan.

Contact Information for Accommodation Requests

IBO's Disability Service Facilitator (DSF), designated pursuant to Local Law 27 of 2016 (codified as NYC Admin Code § 23-1002), is Yolanda Rodriguez. She can be reached at yolandar@ibo.nyc.ny.us, (332) 257-4036. IBO's DSF will coordinate the agency's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal, state, and local laws concerning access for people with disabilities. Any employee or member of the public who needs assistance accessing IBO events (which are largely virtual) or IBO's physical office or has other accessibility needs should contact Yolanda Rodriguez.

IBO's digital inclusion office (DIO) is Tainá Guarda, who can be reached at tainag@ibo.nyc.ny.us, (332) 268-4512. Please contact the DIO with any issues regarding accessibility related to IBO's digital products.

Resources

IBO's website contains helpful information for persons with disabilities, including links to:

- The Agency's non-discrimination policy and notice of rights
- Grievance procedures
- Website accessibility statement
- Five-year accessibility plan

To access IBO's online accessibility resources, please visit:

<https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/aboutwebsiteaccessibilitystatement.html>

Executive Summary

IBO envisions a city of New Yorkers engaging with their government and shaping their futures, using accessible, transparent, and timely budget and policy information.

IBO's mission is to enhance understanding of New York City's budget, public policy, and economy through independent analysis.

IBO's primary function is to provide policymakers and the public with information about the city's economy, budget, and policies. This ranges from publication of three annual reports regarding aspects of the City's budget required by the City Charter, to reviewing specific agency expenditures, to more in-depth considerations of program costs, historical trends, tax burdens, debt, or capital finances. The agency accomplishes this through periodic publications analyzing NYC financial documents. Digital access and effective communication are critical to our work. IBO is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities can access our work easily using clear communication of accessibility options and leveraging technologies, both physical and digital, for providing even easier accessibility when and where possible. IBO's primary focus throughout Local Law 12 planning to date has been our efforts to:

1. Expand how the agency promotes understanding of its mission as broadly as possible to encourage the most diverse range of New Yorkers to request the agency's assistance understanding city policy, economy, budget, and spending.
2. Ensure that IBO's work products cover the broadest range of issues possible and are accessible to the maximum number of New Yorkers.
3. Attract and maintain a diverse workforce by ensuring that IBO's office environment, policies and practices are accessible.

Agency Plan

Physical Access

Implementation Timeframe: 2024-2025

Current Space

IBO currently occupies approximately 8,500 square feet of leased office space on the 14th Floor at 110 William Street, which is an accessible building. In this space, IBO is looking into how building management's plan for fire/emergency management takes into account the needs of people with communication disabilities.

Future Space

The Agency has occupied the same office space since shortly after it was formed in 1996 and is currently searching for new office space. While the agency has worked to promote the accessibility of its current space, planning for the new office space will seek to ensure that the space maximizes accessibility to the extent possible based on the agency's budget. While IBO has yet to select and secure new office space, internal discussions regarding the buildout of the space have included securing the following features to promote accessibility:

- Accessible doors that open and close automatically
- At least one conference room with an assisted listening system

IBO will seek further advice with respect to how to promote accessibility at the office when it is ready to negotiate a lease and embark upon the design of new office space, which is expected to occur in 2024.

Digital Access and Effective Communication

Implementation Timeframe: 2024-2028

Unlike many New York City agencies, IBO does not typically provide on-site or in-person services to the public. The agency receives visits from the public during advisory board meetings and during other pre-established meetings. The most common method by which the IBO relates directly with the public at large is through written publications, virtual slide show presentations and multimedia explanatory products. Written and multimedia products are published on IBO's website and advertised to the public via email and social media posts. Virtual presentations are conducted over MS Teams or Zoom. IBO is committed to ensuring the maximum accessibility of all IBO output. This effort consists of two main components:

1. IBO will review internal processes to implement accessibility checks for any public facing publication or meeting. This will include training to identify inaccessible content and the ability to make it accessible.
2. IBO will simplify the process for requesting accessibility features, both internally for employees and externally for people accessing our publications or attending our events.

Website / Social Media

IBO is currently working to redesign its website, with the intention of launching the updated site in 2024. IBO has hired an outside vendor, UX Design Collective (UXDC), to assist in development of the new site. UXDC prioritizes web accessibility by diligently aligning their designs with the [WCAG 2.2 guidelines](#). UXDC also works collaboratively with clients who require compliance with these standards and educates clients new to accessibility principles. UXDC's dedication to staying up to date with the latest changes and best practices in accessibility allows them to consistently refine their approach to stay in compliance. By integrating these standards seamlessly into their design process, they aim to create more inclusive digital experiences for users. Their expertise will ensure IBO's new website leverages all available resources, so it is accessible to all New Yorkers.

Moving forward, as IBO selects vendors to assist in creating content for the website, the agency will require vendors who submit proposals to ensure that digital deliverables will be accessible.

Over the past several years, IBO has implemented several online features to promote accessibility of multimedia digital content:

- New videos on IBO's YouTube page have well-edited closed captioning.
- IBO includes meaningful alternative text descriptions conveying the information and purpose of images in all social media posts that include images using the social media platform's built-in alt text mechanism.
- Images posted on IBO's website and through social media do not use ASCII text.

IBO is reexamining its practices regarding the use of YouTube's closed captioning capabilities, which the agency has relied upon (without editing) for regular meetings of its Advisory Board.

IBO uses social media to alert users when we release reports and analyses. We will often post more than once to try and reach a wider audience.

Electronic Documents

IBO produces many digital publications, which can be printed but are typically consumed digitally. The majority of our reports are released as PDFs which can be made accessible via the use of reader technology. IBO will explore the accessibility features associated with Infogram, the technology used to create chart books and short reports, which make up the rest of the work products IBO creates.

Mass or Automated Emails

IBO uses Constant Contact to send the link to its publications along with any other IBO related information. The agency will explore accessibility features of this product.

Virtual Meetings

IBO typically uses either Microsoft Teams or Zoom to engage with members of the public virtually. These have AI-generated captioning available, which IBO points out at the beginning of public events. The MOPD Accessible Virtual Meetings Guide is uploaded to a central location for IBO staff to reference.

Internal Applications / Tools

IBO will evaluate software applications used internally for accessibility and public-facing applications and tools.

Workplace Inclusion

Timeframe for Implementation 2024-2028

Accessibility Policies and Procedures

IBO's current EEO policy, which incorporates citywide EEO Policy, is provided to all staff when they start work at the agency. IBO EEO staff train every new staff regarding the policy and practices of the office. In 2024, IBO will review the policy and training agenda to determine what additions or modifications should be made to build upon efforts to accommodate needs of persons with disabilities and ensure that the workforce is as inclusive as possible.

In 2024, IBO will review, assess and amend, as necessary, internal policies and procedures to incorporate accessibility equity into every aspect of IBO's operations with respect to its employees and members of the public with whom the agency interacts.

Current Staff

IBO has taken or will take the following steps to ensure employees receive training and support needed to meet current standards and legislation:

- Ensure new staff complete Disability Etiquette and Awareness training within 60 days of employment.
- Provide educational or training resources in an accessible format that considers the accessibility needs of a person with a disability.
- Maintain records reflecting training participants' names and dates of completion.

Reasonable Accommodations

IBO is committed to ensuring inclusion in its recruitment, assessment and on-boarding processes. IBO will continue to provide reasonable accommodations to employees and applicants with disabilities.

IBO is in the process of taking several steps to strengthen its practices here:

- All job descriptions will notify potential applicants that accommodations are available for employees and applicants who require them. Information for requesting accommodations is included in all interview confirmation communications sent to job applicants and will be included in communications related to fellowship applications when we develop/recruit for a fellowship program.
- Beginning in 2024, open positions at IBO will be posted on AtWork Recruiting and Staffing. IBO will continue to explore other avenues to broaden recruitment of persons with disabilities. IBO has modified notifications in connection with job interviews to make clear that applicants may select from a number of options for where interviews can be held (online via Zoom or MS Teams or in person).
- Given its small size, IBO has not historically organized internships or fellowship programs. However, going forward, IBO is committed to

launching fellowship programs, as space and capacity permit. Recruitment of qualified interns and fellows with disabilities will be a priority. As part of this effort IBO will reach out to Partnership for Inclusive Internships.

Recruitment of Staff

Based on the small size of IBO, the agency does not have dedicated human resources staff and has historically participated in a very small number of formal recruitment events. As such, it has not historically participated in disability-inclusive recruitment events. As part of an agency-wide strategic planning effort commenced shortly after the appointment of our new director in March 2023, the agency is currently considering how to optimize its overall recruitment efforts to reach the most diverse possible group of qualified applicants for every position hired. As part of these new efforts, IBO is considering how to expand jobs posting to venues like NYC: AtWork and participation in disability-inclusive recruitment events. IBO uses structured interviews in connection with all hiring.

Methodology

Beyond ensuring compliance with federal, state and local law, IBO is committed to reviewing its policies and practices and identifying priorities to strengthen accessibility and inclusion. IBO's inter-disciplinary committee formed to develop this plan holds weekly meetings to discuss agency policies and practices and identify and explore opportunities for expanding accessibility across IBO's internal and external activities. IBO participated in citywide Local Law 12 planning meetings and workshops organized by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) and has consulted with MOPD staff on a regular basis throughout the planning process. The committee will continue to meet on a regular basis to implement plans, track progress and modify and add to the plan. The internal committee looks forward to reviewing feedback received through the public comment process and will actively seek to consult with additional resources to refine its plan prior to finalization.